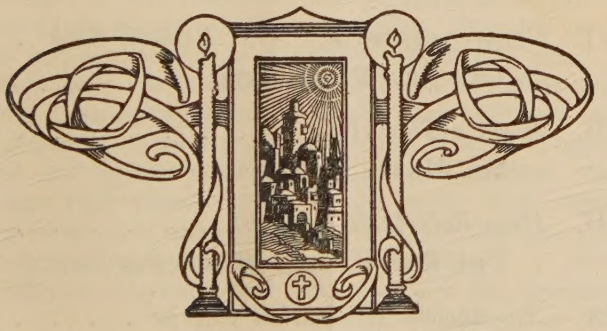
HOLBROOK LIBRARY
PACIFIC SCHOOL
OF RELIGION

The MINISTER'S QUARTERLY

Continuing The Seminar Quarterly

VOLUME X: No. 2 MAY, 1954

Issued in the Interest of Christian Worship and Preaching



The Rev. Gaius Glenn Atkins
Editor

Published quarterly by
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE MINISTRY
OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCHES
287 Fourth Avenue New York 10, N. Y.

SINGLE COPIES 15 CENTS. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION 50 CENTS per year

Entered as second-class matter March 2, 1945, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under Act of March 3, 1879

THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY

Contents Vol. X, No. 2

PAGE

I. *Concerning the Great Constants* 3
THE EDITOR

II. *Liberalism Meets Neo-Orthodoxy* 5
THE REV. HAROLD E. MARTIN

III. *Go Climb Your Everest!* 11
THE REV. J. CHARLES PELON

IV. *A Psychological Factor in Effective Preaching* 15
THE REV. JOSEPH NOVOTNY

V. *A Man Caught Up* 17
THE REV. RICHARD K. MORTON

VI. *Congregationalism's Next Esthetic Step* . . 18
THE REV. FRED SMITH

VII. *From a Side Aisle* 21
MR. HARRY B. MARSH

VIII. *How Fair Is It to Crib?* 23
THE REV. KENDIG BRUBACKER CULLY

IX. *An Ancient Ordination Charge* 26
THE REV. ROBERT L. YOUNG

X. *Recovering Apostolic Kind of Faith* . . . 28
THE REV. GEORGE TOLOVER TOLSON

All rights reserved

The Department of the Ministry is not responsible for opinions expressed in these pages nor is the Editor responsible for the views of contributors.

All communications relating to subscriptions should be addressed to the office of The General Council, Room 915, 287 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

All contributions (typewritten where possible) should be addressed to the Editor: Dr. G. G. Atkins, with stamped envelope for return in case of non-acceptance. Till further notice address all communications to Editor c/o Council office.

Concerning the Great Constants

The Editor

IT is not as easy as it once was to write in April some meditative passages directly or indirectly related to preaching to be published in May. Our northern Mays are capricious, one must confess. A good deal depends upon one's local isothermal lines, but in general the poets have loved it and it has justified their affection. It repeats the timeless wonder of a northern world newly appareled with life and beauty, its garmentures of tender green are as yet unstained and unworn. Our northern world lives out of these vernal resurrections. The Editor has, very likely, in this connection, quoted Viscount Grey's witness to the strength and courage he found in the first World War, in the renewed vernal garmentures of the English meadows he loved so well—as though in a shaken world there was an unfailing constancy revealing an unfailing power, beneath whose ministries earth's scars would be covered and earth's wounds healed. These, since time began, have been the unfailing ministry of earth and sky. We have tried them sorely but they have never yet failed to respond. And now . . .

Well, we seem now to have a power beyond computation to change the very floor of the sea and seam the earth with desolations which will be a long, long time in being healed—if ever. Our technicians are, they say, surprised at what they have accomplished and the uncipherable magnitude of the forces they have wrested from the earth's spirit, which can be released at a trigger's touch. All this is being headlined and radioed and televisioned as this is being written. This Editor's moralizations are commonplace and futile, not, however, much more commonplace and futile than the moralizations of most other editors, some of whom sit in the seats of the mighty. We offer, at best, one more futile observation: there seems to have been amongst us a strange lack of imagination, which our directors in civil defense seem to have shared, and at this writing seem still to share. At any rate, we are leaving the historians of the future a very great deal to explain under, possibly, very different conditions. It needed a thousand years before a historian told the first full story of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.

* * *

St. Paul did not feel called upon to set his world in a pattern of historical continuity. Actually he thought it a rather ephemeral affair and was not, thusly, greatly disturbed. In fact, he personally was ready to welcome its end for many reasons. It could not come too soon. He is cautious, therefore, in his use of words which suggest the enduring—not here and now, at least. But he did bequeath us a trilogy of words charged with the assurances of the enduring. Not things or civilizations, but relationships and attitudes of the human spirit, nor does he set a time limit to them; otherwise they would not qualify as "abiding."

They are at the end of the most lyric passage the apostle ever wrote, with the key to right human relationships for which Paul here uses an old Greek word rather rarely used. (He had a gift for that.) The entire thirteenth chapter of his first letter to the Corinthian church, which seems to have been somewhat lacking in that particular quality, is his definition of it and his conception of how it should work, within and amongst us,

everywhere and always. That chapter, just now particularly, seems to deserve a more general reading than it seems to be getting anywhere by anybody, especially our publicists.

With spacious and sovereign words the apostle, who sensed deeply the fugitive character of his current civilization, said that what we trust in, really believe in, hope for and try to share with others, even under the most difficult and trying circumstances, belong to the dimensions of the truly enduring.

This faith and hope and love, were, he said, the bequest of Jesus Christ and he made his terms spacious enough to include the whole conduct of life, both individual and social, so long as it was essentially Christian—in itself a spacious and sovereign word.

* * *

Toynbee, who more than most, made it his business to trace the rise and fall of civilizations, offers many explanations of "whys" and "wherefores," but he reduced them all in his final appraisals to failures in the human spirit. Believing in wrong things, hoping for insufficient things, caring for delusive things, and so, though the Editor does not remember the details of his indictments, failing in faith and hope and love. The shadows which fall across civilization rise in the human soul. Somewhere in all those tangles is the source of the relative failure of Christianity in crisis times—like ours.

Of course "failure" is a pretty strong word, by any number of tests, altogether too strong. Materially, statistically, in range and power of organization and the Christian character of almost countless individuals the Christian order was never stronger—and yet there are still the headlines of any newspaper on this 8th of April, 1954. They are not exactly bulletins from a Christian front, and they are not likely to be changed in substance when this issue of THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY gets in the May mails.

* * *

The dominants in our American preaching just now—beside the rather nebulous neo-orthodoxy—are the supporting sources of Christian faith and courage, mediated through current psychologies, in individual crises, along with the power to win character from crises, so transforming them into contributions. All this cannot and should not be underestimated. Crises of any sort challenge us to find out what we have in ourselves to win through them and make them contributory to our individual faiths and hopes. Many believe that the only hope of a troubled world is in individuals so empowered—and they may be right, though it comes later than they think.

There should be some other way of far more completely Christianizing orders, and conditions, and this demands a greatly increased force of social, economic and international cooperation furnished with an adequate implementation. The "implementation" is now and long has been the handicap of what used to be called the "Social Gospel" and the situation is still further entangled in that the advocates of a Christian order are dealing with tremendous forces for which the word Christian and even the word religion have apparently no meanings at all. All this is the entangled multiplication of situations old as recorded human history. It can be paralleled in kind, if not in degree, by the Chronicles of the Old Testament and the moralizations thereupon by prophets, psalmists, and the wisdom of Job and Ecclesiastes.

* * *

It is difficult to believe that many aspects of our international policies carry the complete inner consent of Christian laymen and ministers. It is increasingly difficult for the individual to say so—or know what he would offer instead. A preacher may, at best, remember that he is preaching to troubled congregations and offer them the light and wisdom he has found in the hallowed and time-tested revelations of his Bible. There are

many burning questions which might be handled better in discussion groups than in the pulpit. But assuredly, the range and applicability of the great constants, faith and hope and love, need unfailingly to be stressed. They are not meant to be exercised in a vacuum, but in the stress and travail of here and now.

There is an often repeated story of a day, long ago, in Connecticut, remembered as the "Dark Day." The legislature—whatever its name then—was in session, and as the darkness grew ominous the assembled legislators foresaw, they thought, the final coming of the "Day of the Lord"—and they were sore afraid. Whereupon a leader ordered candles to be brought. "If this," he said, "is the end of the world, we would best be faithful to our appointed tasks. Let the candles be lighted and let us continue our session." This at least a preacher can do, keep our candles lighted and hope for a fuller and happier light. It will not fail us, unless we fail it.

And meanwhile this is May. The Editor, reading this in print, will be wondering how he managed to write relatively so much—and say so little—relatively, perhaps because he has permitted the implications of bombs and bombast to cloud his vision. A preacher's congregation is getting enough of this weekdays. They should meet St. Paul's constants as they cross the threshold of their churches. That is what churches are for.

Liberalism Meets Neo-Orthodoxy

The Rev. Harold E. Martin

Norwalk, Connecticut

At the spring meeting of the Fairfield County Association of Congregational Christian Churches on May 12, 1953, three young men applied for ordination into the ministry and were examined by the Association sitting as an ecclesiastical council. All three ordination papers were excellent. Two of the men were graduates of Yale Divinity School and one was a graduate of Union Theological Seminary. All three papers expressed in varying fashion the pattern of theological thought now dominant in the major theological seminaries. The theological jargon, the quotations, the twists of phrase and the basic pre-suppositions come out of the seething caldron of "crisis" or "neo-orthodox" theology.

The papers were so clearly written, so expressive of current theological discussion, that I asked permission of the three ordinands to study the papers at leisure. In the meantime I dug out of my files my own ordination paper and asked some of my contemporaries to let me read their ordination papers. As it turned out I succeeded in securing the ordination papers of two graduates of Yale Divinity School in 1928 and 1931, one graduate of Chicago Theological Seminary in 1934, and a statement of faith, written at a later date for an installation council, of a man graduated from Union Seminary in 1925.

The form of an ordination paper for presentation to an ecclesiastical council of the Congregational Christian Churches has remained the same through the years. First a statement concerning a man's religious experience, then a statement of faith concerning God, Christ, The Holy Spirit, man, the Church, the Bible and immortality. The intellectual climate out of which such papers are written is quite evident and most interesting. It is my purpose in this paper to compare the thought forms of "liberalism" as expressed a quarter of a century ago and the thought forms of "neo-orthodoxy"

as expressed in the ordination papers of students just graduating from theological seminaries. I am aware that a man's theological thinking matures rapidly or disappears entirely soon after he assumes responsibility in his first parish; but the flavor of the theological patter which, learned in seminary, remains throughout his life, unless he becomes a special student of theology or rebels against the restrictions of the theology pattern he was exposed to in theological school.

I

Besides the common factor of the form of the ordination paper expected by an ecclesiastical council of the Congregational Christian Churches, is the common factor of dissent which appears in each of the seven papers under review. While each paper in general expresses the contemporary theological pattern, each ordinand expresses at some point or other a personal disagreement with his theological professors and insists on expressing his own opinion, belief and conviction. In other words, the right of individual judgment and a man's freedom of conscience is more than an unused dogma to which men give lip service in our Congregational Christian Churches. Each man at the beginning of his professional relationship to the churches is encouraged to freely express his own conviction. The judgment of the ordaining council is based on a man's general competence and the vitality of his religious experience, rather than on a strict conformity to the detail of theological doctrine or dogma current at the time.

It seems to me to be terribly important that we maintain this tradition of spiritual freedom and dissent from whatever theological pattern of thought which may be dominant in any generation. For I believe that underneath the varying forms of theological expression the ultimate questions of Christian faith remain.

Each of the ordinands here under review records his church-centered home environment as the beginning of his personal religious experience. Each attended Sunday School, participated in the youth activities of his Church, and found in his home illustrations of "Christian principles of unselfishness, forgiveness and love" which made Christian faith acceptable, and religious experience to be expected in the normal course of the process of growth.

The young men of a generation ago seem to express in their papers a personal piety and an individual sense of response to God's presence, and the leadership of Jesus in the midst of daily life, which was not expressed in the papers of the ordinands of 1953.

In college each of the ordinands compared his youthful understanding of religion with the new knowledge of the larger world which he was discovering in the college classroom. The men of a generation ago were on the defensive against "scepticism, critical analysis" and the "acids of modernity." Their language in the ordination papers is heavily spiced with scientific terms. The "creation stories" of the Bible versus various theories of "evolution" was one of the intellectual problems which engaged their thought. All of the men here under review had grown up in churches led by "liberal" pastors so that none of them record "dramatic or cataclysmic conversion experience" but witness to a "series of partial insights into the nature of the universe." Their discovery in divinity school or theological seminary of the historical approach to the Bible was not a crisis experience, as it would have been if they had been trained in a fundamental church environment. The older men were partially prepared for ever-widening horizons and absorbed as much as the "scientific attitude" toward all of life, as they could, without doing violence to the personal piety and youthful religious experience on which their souls fed until they could attain a wider understanding of the world in which they lived.

The younger men take for granted the century-long labor of Biblical scholars and accept the findings of the "higher critics" without feeling any need to de-

fend the historical approach to the documents which constitute the Holy Scriptures of the Judeo-Christian tradition.

The ordinands of a generation ago were quite sure that the personal piety and individual religious experience by which they had been brought into a deep and enduring relationship with God through Christ Jesus was not enough. They express in varying degrees the need for applying Christian principles to the social order. "War, slavery, commercialized vice, exploitation of the weak by the strong, class and race bitterness and strife, social and economic injustice . . are unchristian areas in our midst which the church must attempt to blot out." "Our first task is to win individuals to Christ-centered lives and these transformed individuals will build a transformed society"; is the way one of the ordinands expressed the social ideals in the 1930's.

Interestingly enough, the ordinands of 1953 indicate in their papers that the Christian Social Gospel was one of the important factors in their experience which led them to train themselves for full-time Christian service. And yet there seems to be some indication in the outlook and emphasis of these younger men that they will lead the congregations they serve in the direction of personal piety and self-commitment, rather than in the direction of "Christianizing the Social Order."

Both groups of men, separated as they are by a generation of world-wide crisis and distress agree that Jesus Christ is the answer to the problems and perplexities of human life. The "Way of Jesus" for the older men and the "Word made flesh" for the younger men is the fundamental motivating power of the Christian church. All are critical of the church which has forgotten its first responsibility to call men to repentance and newness of life.

II

The second sections of the ordination papers deal with theological presuppositions and are an attempt on the part of each man to express in compact form his personal understanding of the intellectual problems raised when religion meets life. The more or less standard procedure is for the ordinand to state his belief in God, in Christ, in the Holy Spirit in the language which reveals the breadth of his own thinking and the type of criticism of religion which he thinks is most serious at the time he writes. He then goes on to discuss his attitude toward the church, the Bible and mankind and such other doctrines or dogmas which he thinks important. Inevitably the papers, being written by young men just graduating from divinity school or seminary, are filled with scholarly references and professorial points of view.

One paper written in the 1930's is deeply colored by "behaviorism"; another expresses MacIntosh's "empirical approach" to theology; another reveals the "modernism" of Fosdick shining through. Not unexpectedly, the intellectual vigor of Barth, Brunner, Niebuhr, Pauck and Tillich shines through the language and the concepts of the ordination papers written in 1953. Each man, out of the background material of current theological discussion chooses to express that which is meaningful in his own experience and to ignore that which is beyond his own intellectual attainments.

For the men of a generation ago, God was "a supreme reality" (4), "a being who has cosmic significance in reality" (2), "a creative cosmic mind" (1), who "conserves the values which man produces" (2), or is the supreme realization of the highest values we know" (1). But this cosmic force, creator and sustainer of the world we know is a person, "a personality making power" (4), "a personal God and Father" (1), "a person with infinite energy, unlimited intelligence, and boundless love" (2), God is Christlike "He loves men, he understands men, He is actively interested in aiding men to attain salvation" (2), God is "the force working for good, the moral value in the universe, and the moral will" (4).

The ordinands of 1953 have little to say about the reality of God or about God as a person or an Heavenly Father. Two of the papers describe God as "Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer and Judge" (5 and 7), and the third says "God is Creator, we the creatures, and in that relationship we are made entirely dependent upon Him" (7). The reality of God and the person of God is to be discovered" in Jesus Christ, His complete revelation" (6). In Jesus "God himself came to us asking to be known" (7).

III

It is in the discussion of Christ, that the ordinands of 1953 differ most obviously from the ordinands of the late 1920's and the early 1930's. One of the men ordained this year writes, "I had known Christ before largely in terms of a teacher of things which seemed absurd ideals. I came to know him as the revelation of God himself"—"To be sure he was man . . . but this man was God" (7). Another writes, "Jesus was fully human, but he was also the Christ, Messiah, Son of God" (5); and the other says, "In Jesus Christ we see . . . God the Redeemer" (6). They insist on the humanness of Jesus; but also insist that "Christ is the Word made Flesh, the full and final incarnation of God" (7).

The men ordained a generation ago were quite agreed that Jesus was a unique revelation of God, but hesitated to ascribe to him either a complete revelation of God, or to describe him as God. One writes, "Jesus Christ was no ordinary man, nor was he God in human form. He reveals God. He was God centered. He was a man different in degree, but not in kind" (2) from other men. Another writes, "In so far as it is possible for the Creative spirit of life to enter human flesh, it happened in the spirit of Jesus" (4); Another writes, "Jesus is the greatest man the world has ever known. He knew God better than anyone else before or since. He developed that spark of divinity which is in every human being to the extent that no one else has before or since" (3); Another writes, "Christ revealed the true nature of God, in him God entered human form to show men the highest moral and spiritual possibilities of human personality (1).

It is difficult to equate these divergent points of view concerning Jesus Christ. One has the feeling that the ordinands of a generation ago were conscious of the older and more conservative ministers in the ecclesiastical councils who might ask indignant questions concerning the diety of Christ; and therefore included in their papers references to the "divinity of Jesus"; but it is perfectly evident that their real interest was in the personality of Jesus, the man. The contemporary ordinands, conscious of the older and "liberal" ministers in the ecclesiastical council who might ask indignant questions concerning the manhood of the Master; therefore included in their papers references to the real humanity of Jesus and the ideals and moral teachings of the "days of his flesh"; but it is perfectly evident that their real interest is in the Divine Christ, King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

As one of the ordinands of 1953 expressed it, "The Holy Spirit seems neglected in theology. It means the workings of God in human history and in human lives—the continuing expression of his activity and his will" (5); another agrees that "God incarnate in Jesus Christ continues to be at work in the world through the Holy Spirit" (6); and the other describes the Holy Spirit "as the continuing revelation of God at work among us." Two of the four ordinands of a generation ago make no reference to the Holy Spirit. The others agree that the Holy Spirit "is the revelation of the divine nature in the life of man"; and one of them sees "no reason why God must be limited to only three means of revealing himself to man" (1); and the other suggests that "the Holy Spirit is the imminent God" (2) discovered by men in "the revelations of truth,

goodness and beauty in the midst of the world."

IV

Striking differences of attitude are evident in these papers when the doctrine of man is discussed. The ordinands of a generation ago had an optimistic faith in man. One of the men wrote, "I believe in man; no matter how degraded he may have become in the social scale, there is a spark of the divine in him" (1). Another called him "a son of God, capable of living according to the principles which guide God's activity" (2); and another reminds his hearers of the "dignity of man and the sacredness of personality" (4); man's freedom and responsibility is emphasized and sin appears as "man's failure to create value by the proper use of his talents and abilities" (2).

The ordinands of 1953 recognize man as a sinner; although one of them remarked that "the new theology does not forget the goodness of man; although it seems to stress mostly the sinfulness of man" (5). "Man has sinned and man continues to sin in placing himself on a level with his Creator and in his pride and arrogance playing God himself" (6) is the way one man expresses it; and another writes, "We cannot accept our relativity and our total dependence" (7) and therefore "man is known as sinner" (7); and another writes, "God created man with freedom and in that freedom man has transgressed his relationship with God and now we confess man as sinner" (6) because of his "self-alienation from God" (7); "Most men are estranged from their creator, . . . and here is the root of sin" (5); "The image of God in man has been defaced and distorted by his sin, his rebellion against God, his defiance of God's will, his pride and worship of false man made gods" (5). Such passionate denunciation of men used to be reserved for "the robber barons," "dollar diplomacy" and the "war-mongers" in the 1930's and the "political rings" and "liquor interests" in the 1920's.

Curiously enough these young men just being ordained were inspired by *the Social Gospel* to find in Christianity meaning and purpose for their lives. Their study of religion has led them beyond liberalism which expressed itself most effectively in the Social Gospel to discover a new depth in human personality and a new call of God in Christ Jesus to the souls of all men everywhere. The drive to save society and to create a social order and environment wherein men could be Christian, has led men to a new appreciation of the need of every man, at every level of society, for the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. The right relation of the individual person to God remains the first step in the redemption of the world and the reconciliation of man to his Creator.

V

These varying attitudes toward Christ and toward man, expressed in the ordination papers lead to radically different concepts of the Church. While all are agreed that "the Church is invisible and catholic" (6) surviving in the world in spite of itself, because some part of it is more than institutional; all are agreed that the Church as an institution has failed. The men of a generation ago tend to think of the Church as a human institution which gathers into fellowship the followers of Jesus. As one man wrote, "The Church is a human creation, and in spite of its many achievements is a very faulty instrument" (1). He continues: "My interest is in the growth in power of the Christian religion in men's hearts and in the transformation of society, not in the perpetuation of any institution" (1); another writes that "The Church should be broad enough to include in its membership all those people who are earnestly seeking to adjust themselves to God and who are striving to follow Jesus Christ, not too 'afar off'" (2).

The ordinands of 1953 tend to em-

phasize the divine nature of the Church. It is a "fellowship of those who believe in Jesus Christ" as divine saviour and is "always under the judgment of the Scriptures and the event to which they testify—even Jesus Christ our Lord" (7); "and central in our task today is that of proclaiming anew the call of God to man in Jesus Christ" (7); "The function of the Church is that of worship and work. Its worship is of the One True God made known in Jesus Christ. And its work is God's own work of reconciliation" (7); "The Church is no human creation, but rather the work of God in Christ who is the head of the Church" (7); "I believe that the sacraments are symbols by which we may participate in God's work of reconciliation. Baptism is a sacrament for admission into the visible Church. The Lord's Supper is our participation in the sacrifice made for us" (7); Another man writes, "The churches have two functions—worship and work, proclaiming the Gospel of reconciliation sustained by the Holy Spirit, and the administration of the sacraments, prayer and reading and exposition of the Scriptures" (6).

All agree that the Bible is the source book for Christian faith. The ordinands of 1953 think of the Scriptures "as the witness to God's revelation" (7); "It is our sole authority and that authority comes not from us but from God." It is the Word of God, not in a literal, but in an evangelical sense. It provides a revelation of God through the context of its writing.

The ordinands of a generation ago living in the midst of violent and bitter discussion of the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy wrote more fully of their attitude toward the Bible. One writes, "The Bible is human document recording the steps in religious progress" (1); "Much of the Bible has little value today, but when all the chaff has been winnowed away, men can learn more from the wheat that remains about the nature of God and the meaning of life than from any other source in literature" (1); And another writes, "The Old Testament is composed of a number of writings of various Hebrew authors written at different times, often edited and re-edited by later authors and compilers" and the New Testament is a "group of writings by men who were filled with the inspiration of their contact with Jesus Christ" (2) and very conscious of the confusing difficulty of sorting out the various strands of tradition and authorship; he writes, "We find in the New Testament many of the original sayings of Jesus . . . but some of the sayings put into the mouth of Jesus by the Gospel writers are of secondary importance" (2).

The ordinands of a generation ago had a lively interest in clearly stating their belief "in the survival of personality after death" (4). The contemporary ordinands "hope in the promise of life everlasting" (7) and record that "God in Christ also reveals to us the victory over death" (6) and suggest that "apart from the forgiveness of sin it is impossible to enter into the community of the everlasting life" (6). The ordinands of a generation ago were more concerned with the survival of personality beyond the grave. One writes: "I believe that the self, not being a physical thing, continues to exist after the death of the physical body" (2) and "beyond the grave persons will have further opportunity" (2). Another writes, "Earthly life is far too short for men to achieve the fullness of personality and enter into complete harmony with God. Hence belief in immortality of the personality beyond the limitations of physical life is perfectly reasonable, even necessary" (1); he continues: "The belief that man is not a mere bio-chemical organism or a machine, but is a free personality of the same nature as divinity gives one a strong hope for the salvation of the individual, the redemption of society, and makes necessary a belief in individual immortality for the fulfillment of the divine plan" (1). And another sums it up by writing, "For me personality is not an

accident in this universe; but intimately related to Ultimate Reality, eternal as God is eternal" (4).

It seems to me important that we be conscious of the changes in theological outlook during the past twenty-five years. Undoubtedly the men ordained a generation ago have kept up on their reading and are aware of the *new theology*. I'm not sure that the younger men are aware of the full range of *liberal* theological thought, except as they recall the teaching and preaching they were exposed to during childhood.

I am concerned about what will happen when a congregation which has sat under the preaching of a *liberal* or a series of *liberal* preachers for a generation is suddenly confronted with a new pastor whose training has been *neo-orthodox*. The congregation may be confused by new language, new concepts, new expressions of the Christian faith.

As those of us trained in *liberal* theology get older and more set in our ways and as the *new theology* gains adherents and becomes more vocal in ecclesiastical councils, associations and state conferences, we may have some *battle royals* which may be fun for the participants and sharpen their wits and confirm them in their publicly defended points of view. But the churches will suffer, if controversy is allowed to destroy mutual good will and respect for the conscientious convictions of others.

We need to cultivate mutual understanding and to discover hidden in the midst of varying expressions of Christian faith the fundamental teaching of Jesus that God cares for his human children, and is willing to love and help them in spite of their folly and sin.

(1) McGown (2) Martin (3) Craw (4) W. W. Anderson (5) Adams (6) Van Vactor (7) Baldwin

Go Climb Your Everest!

The Rev. J. Charles Pelon
Mount Vernon, N. Y.

IT is only a few months ago that all of us read, for the first time in the history of mankind and of man's attempts at climbing mountains, of the conquest of Mount Everest, highest peak in the Himalayas and in all the world. This brilliant British Exposition, organized and consummated in honor of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, had no more thrilling episode than the final scaling of the summit, when Tenzing Norkay, a Sherpa guide, and Edmund Hillary, a New Zealand beekeeper, two hitherto unknown members of the Expedition, set their feet upon the point of earth nearest heaven and thereby stepped into the sunlight of immortality.

Perhaps this wonderful story, stranger and more exciting than the rarest fiction, is still sufficiently fresh in our minds so that we can draw a few helpful lessons from it. For, after all, being a Christian—becoming Christian, that is—is very much like climbing a mountain, and the tallest mountain at that! Spiritual experience is the Everest of the whole Himalayan range of human experiences. Ofter we attempt sundry heights but only grovel at the base of this most glorious mountain—the Everest of spiritual experience.

Today I want to challenge each one here, myself included, with the call, Go climb your Everest! This is but the

preacher's faint echo of the Voice of God's Spirit: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord," and, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for God is at work in you."

As we weigh the call to scale the summit of Christian experience, I would offer these simple suggestions.

I

Accept the Challenge

The first of these is: *Accept the challenge.* Many so-called Christians have never learned that being a Christian in name is one thing, while becoming a Christian in character and in conduct is something more. It is the latter which can be life's greatest exploit. Becoming *a* Christian is glorious, but becoming Christian is a lifelong exhilarating adventure. Wasn't it Martin Luther who said, "One is never wholly Christian, he is always in the process of becoming"? It is this constant striving toward the acme of perfection, this struggling upward toward the summit of Christian living, which constitutes life's great adventure.

Now, as in mountain climbing, so in the life of expanding faith, there are three phases in the adventure: exploration, reconnaissance, assault. One does not begin by assaulting the summit. He begins by exploring the territory. He studies the maps and the seasons; he gathers all available data for careful perusal; he threads his way through forests and valleys, until at last he is established at the base of the mountain. "The end of the exploration is the beginning of the enterprise," said Livingstone. Now the mountain climber is ready for the second phase of the adventure: *reconnaissance.* He has made a beginning. He knows where he is—at the base of the mountain. He knows where he wants to go—to the summit of the mountain. He is not yet sure of the route he will take, the trail he will follow. Therefore, reconnaissance. He makes limited approaches toward the summit from various directions and points of vantage.

He engages in a series of test climbs, to discover the path most likely to lead to final success, and to prepare himself for those rarer heights to which he aspires. Then comes the third phase of the adventure: assault. It was my privilege last winter to see the priceless pictures of the reconnaissance of the South Face of Everest, taken by Mr. Houston of Texas, and his famous mountain-climbing son, Doctor Houston of Exeter, New Hampshire, about whose unsuccessful assault upon Mount Godwin Austen, otherwise known as K–2, I am sure you all read this summer, an expedition that ended also in the tragic loss of the brilliant young American physicist, Doctor Gilkie. This reconnaissance of the South Face of Everest was of tremendous assistance and value to the British Expedition in their preparation for final assault. The point here is that no assault on the summit of any Everest can succeed without the preliminary phases of exploration and reconnaissance.

II

What does all this mean in terms of Christian experience? It means that in the realms of companionships, ideas, and social relationships, as Christians, we go through the same three phases of adventure, in the order given. The tragedy is that most of us never get very far even in the first phase, that of exploration. What a wealth of experience awaits us here!—in the companionship of Christ; in the companionship of the prophets, the apostles, and the martyrs; in the companionship of the great souls of the Bible and the devoted spirits of all ages. We haven't even begun to get acquainted with the possibilities of Christian companionship that lie all around us.

Then there is the realm of ideas: the great ideas of the Bible and of Christian thinkers of all ages; the great ideas of philosophy concerning God, man, and the universe; the great ideas of the Church as expressed in its creeds, its liturgies, and its music. How much even preliminary exploration have we done in

this realm, to say nothing of reconnaissance and assault?

The same is true in the realm of social relationships. Most of us haven't even begun to explore these relationships from the Christian point of view, let alone attempting reconnaissance and assault, which would be the application of spiritual principles to such relationships, especially in crisis.

And so I say again, there is a great adventure in Christian living that stretches out before us and beckons us to higher heights. Wherefore, Go climb your Everest!

But we had better get started. It is later than you think. We should accept the challenge to spiritual adventure in the light of the limited time allotted to us for climbing. No one climbs an Everest without being conscious of the brevity of the season. The summit may be reached only between the melting of the winter snows and the onset of the monsoon.

What a lesson this holds for us! And how it impresses upon us our responsibility! For it is in our earthly life that we are given the privilege of this adventure to scale the heights of spiritual experience. The winter snows have melted and the sunlight of God's grace is shining brightly, but the monsoon is coming! Wherefore, let every man keep the summit in view, and press on. "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord." Go, climb your Everest!

III

And what of the spirit in which the challenge must be accepted? Each phase of the adventure calls for its peculiar spirit. Exploration calls for the spirit of curiosity. Reconnaissance calls for the spirit of courage. And assault upon the summit calls for the spirit of consecration. In the realm of spiritual living, as in the exploit of scaling the highest mountain, we shall not go very far or very high without the enabling spirit. But do not be daunted; for God is at work in you. Go, climb your Everest, but ask God to imbue you with the spirit of insatiable questing, indomitable courage, and unswerving consecration. He withholds not His Spirit from them that ask.

Appreciate your Companions

My next suggestion in this adventure of climbing the Everest of spiritual experience is: *Appreciate your companions.* Maurice Herzog, in the foreword of his book, *Annapurna,* says with characteristic modesty yet with vital accuracy, "This book is the work of the whole party." Well, if the book was the work of the whole party, most certainly the expedition was. And think of the more recent British Expedition. Only two set foot on the summit of Everest, but that victory was the victory of the whole party. So, too, victory in the Christian life is a collective victory. Who are some of these companions who help us to reach the heights of spiritual experience, companions whom we ought to appreciate more than we do? One thinks first of the members of his family. Many of you have been helped up the mountain trail by the prayers of a saintly mother. Others have been encouraged to the heights by the wise and understanding counsel of a godly father. Still others have been encouraged in the Christian adventure by the confiding trust of a sympathetic brother or the genuine forgiveness of a loving sister. Let us learn to appreciate those nearest and dearest to us, the members of our families, who are also our companions upon the mountain way.

Learn to appreciate your fellow-parishioners. They are mountain climbers with you, and, what is more, they are going up by the same trail you are taking, and they strive for the same summit. This is the genius and the wonder of the local church: quite a heterogeneous lot of folk, yet one in spirit and in purpose, all set upon the same trail and striving toward the same summit. Learn to appreciate your fellow church-members. They are your companions on the Everest way!

IV

And let us not forget to appreciate all other Christians of the Church Universal. They, too, are our companions on the upward trail. The Hindu name for Mount Everest is "the Goddess Mother of the World." We may well think of the Christian Church as the goddess Mother of the spiritual community. The Christian Church is a universal family and all fellow-Christians are born and nurtured within the same family. The remembrance of this fact should help to make us more charitable toward, and more appreciative of, fellow Christians who happen to belong to other churches and other denominations. It is never good manners in mountain climbing to throw stones at those below or upon the heads of those who may be coming up another trail. One may call down a helpful direction or a friendly hello, but one does not throw stones. Most mountains have many trails, but all trails ascend toward the top and end at the summit. In the adventure of spiritual experience some go up by the Methodist trail; some by the Lutheran trail; others by the Presbyterian trail, the Baptist trail, the Episcopal trail, and so on. Suffice it to say, that all trails come closer together as they go higher—what a suggestive thought that is for the whole modern ecumenical movement!—and that in the summit all trails merge and are lost. The end of every trail is the summit—the mountain of the Presence of the Lord. Therefore, in striving for the summit of spiritual experience we will resolve to appreciate every companion of the upward way.

But among the companions to appreciate, let us not forget the Organizer of the expedition! The Sherpa guide and the New Zealand beekeeper would not have gone very far without Colonel Hunt, the organizing genius and the directing spirit of the whole recent Himalayan expedition. And how far, think you, would you and I get in our adventure of spiritual mountain climbing were it not for the Divine Organizer of our expedition? We owe everything to Him. He is an experienced mountain climber in His own right. For did He not scale Hermon and Tabor. And did He not climb the mountain called Calvary? Go climb your Everest, dear Christian friend, but do not forget the One who organized the expedition for you, the One who gives you the directions and the spirit for scaling the heights. Learn to appreciate Him and take Him as the dear and trusted companion of your upward ascent.

V

What does one do when he has achieved victory in the final assault? It is said that Norkay and Hillary, having reached the summit of Everest, remained for twenty minutes, during which brief period they offered their prayers, planted their flags, took photographs, ate mint cake, checked their oxygen, and began the descent. But was that all? Indeed not! They went straight to London, and to Buckingham Palace, and to the Throne Room. When one achieves such a victory he holds concourse with the Queen. So in the adventure of spiritual experience. The climax of the climb is not merely the summit of some intellectual, or emotional, or even ecstatic mystical experience. When one has reached the summit of the mountain of faith's adventure he stands in the Royal Presence. He kneels before his God. At the summit of the Everest of spiritual adventure one holds concourse with the Eternal.

And the same God who awaits you is working in you. The mountain of the Lord is the place of His Presence. The summit lies distant and high; the trail is long and rugged and steep; and you, being saved, must now work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. But you can do it; for God is at work in you.

Go climb your Everest! And may God ever set your feet in lofty places!

A Psychological Factor in Effective Preaching

The Rev. Joseph Novotny
New Hartford, Connecticut

UNTIL recently moralizing in the literary world was a thing forbidden, and literary critics frowned upon a writer who made room in his work for the entrance of an ethical motive. All writers were formerly bound by the unwritten law, "art for art's sake," but of late that law has lost much of its force. Today there are many authors who dare point morals that are very distinct in character, and the critics permit the practice. In spite of their greater freedom, however, writers who wish to induct any moral into art must still observe a certain time-honored principle. In all truly poetical works, and it may be "poetical" prose, even the noblest aims must be veiled. Writers should not offend by making use of obtrusive methods in driving home the lessons they wish to teach, they should charm the reader and allure him to truth. There are very important reasons why the principle must be observed. Great artists take for granted readers of great understanding. A writer who expresses his purpose in a blunt way underestimates the sensibility of his reader and works against the proverb *verb. sap.* The poet who lightly touches upon some great truth honors the reader, invites him to cooperation, and expects understanding. He believes in him. He believes that a gentle hint will set the reader to thinking for himself. In dealing with an ethical problem the writer who couches his thoughts in velvety words will have more success with really great readers than a journalist who, assuming a pugilistic attitude, writes with his sleeves rolled up and uses only violent expressions. An artist with a vocabulary of carefully chosen terms and with deep purpose back of the words, will compel his reader to think about the matter and to draw his own conclusions.

I

It is interesting to observe that the careful reader of the Bible will find this method used in the Book of books. The masterly story of The Prodigal Son contains not a vestige of a concluding moral. The majority of the parables were told without explanation and without ethical conclusion. The marvelous parable of The Sower was explained only at the request of those who did not understand. The commandment "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain" may be interpreted in a new way. Told in paraphrase the passage may mean this, "Be restrained when speaking of the spiritual world and most careful to avoid extravagance in using the Name which is above every name." The Book of books first of all abides by this commandment.

There is a question as to whether the sermon belongs in the sphere of science or of art. Yet it is without doubt nearer to art than to science. Surely the sermon has its own place in literature. The preacher whose soul possesses more of the treasures of art than of science will surely be more successful than the preacher who belongs rather to the scientific class. Similarly, a perfect sermon must have the marks of an artistic work and consequently must not indicate a disregard for the requirement of keeping the purpose of preaching in the background. The preacher of course must be allowed to give some thought to the impression that his words will make upon his hearers. The preacher should be allowed to make use of oratory. This is not only allowed, but is a commandment, and yet the requirement of moralizing

with reserve must be practiced even in the sermon. Many preachers simply preach to pieces some powerful text, or sermonize superficially. In a futile effort to make all his hearers understand him a preacher sometimes throws heavy words from the pulpit upon the heads of his hearers, but a person cannot help feeling that such words have only a hollow sound like a false coin. It is possible to speak definitely and yet not to offend with indelicacy. A moralizing opinion presented in a blunt way has no lasting value and can scarcely hope to be crowned with the greatest success of the preacher that of moving the hearer to a deed. If a preacher desires so to win the interest of the hearer as to move him to action then he must make it possible for the hearer to think the sermon through himself. The preacher ought to help his hearer and believe that the desired step will be taken by the hearer.

II

The remark that we preach to the common people, to the public in the broadest sense of the word, and that our message must be clear and popular does not refute this statement, but reenforces it. The typical art of the common folk is that of the folk-tales. It is the genius of the people that writes the national tales. The readers of them are children who probably most would need an explanation of the purposes of the tales, and yet there is not another phase of literature where the unknown genius so hides in velvety words his ultimate aim and here and there drops between the lines thoughts savory as salt.

Most of those preachers who enjoy driving their purpose boldly to the foreground of their sermons are the zealous evangelists, the public speakers, the open-air rhetoricians, and the street moralizers. But sometimes even an able minister smuggles into his pulpit terms with too distinct a purpose, and thus the good sermon is weakened rather than strengthened.

If a preacher senses the fact that he is running into this danger he ought to read through very carefully the parables of Jesus and by them to measure the value of his sermons and then draw his own conclusions. It is a mistake to overestimate the hearer and to shoot above his head, but it is just as serious a mistake to underestimate the hearer, to offend him by presenting obvious facts with dull statements of common truth and ordinary half truth, or with matters of course.

Nothing will more surely tend to drive people away from church than for them to find no satisfaction in the sermon. Let them have the feeling that the preacher has underestimated their intellectual ability, and they will not come again. They have been offended with vain repetitions, have been degraded to the position of passive, unthinking listeners. They expect the preacher himself to observe the Biblical injunction, "Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only." The preacher may not be bound by "art for art's sake," but surely he should let moralizing be done in accordance with the principles governing art. A worthy motive is even today no excuse for the use of poor art be it in literature as such or in purposeful sermons.

A Man Caught Up

The Rev. Richard K. Morton
Jacksonville, Florida

MINISTRY in the name of Christ today surely depends, in part, at least, upon one's vision of what is unseen to others, and ecstatic possession of what fails to move many others.

The religion of Jesus stirs us to formulate beliefs and to acquire knowledge and perform service and to become better in mind and spirit. But it must also involve being caught up in great emotions and enthusiasms.

Paul was one in a position to know the vital role to be played by ecstasy. Scholar, teacher, legalist, staunch exponent of the traditional faith of the Jews, he had gone through a tremendous religious experience, including a conversion and complete acceptance of Jesus as Messiah. Great exponent of the Law, now he had become bondservant of a Savior and exponent of the Spirit.

Speaking of his own tremendous experience, in 2 Corinthians 12:2, he paid tribute to the vital emotional impact of belief to "a man caught up to the third heaven," and "how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."

I am sure that none among us needs to be forewarned, in these times, against the vagaries and excesses of uncritical emotional activities and of extreme orgies of emotion in the name of religion. No one would want to translate fervent religion into terms of mere emotional extravagancies.

While affirming this, we must be careful not to dessicate religion and take all liveliness and emotion out of it until there remain only the dry bones, the forms, and the institutions.

We have suffered for this as a faith and as churches. We have lost many who otherwise would have joined us. We have narrowed our ministry.

I

What I am suggesting is that these days require, in the pew as well as in the pulpit, "men caught up," men of lively and clear vision, men of profound convictions but soaring enthusiasms, men of great moral character but also tremendous emotional capacity, who are caught up in the spirit of their times and by the power of the Gospel through the Holy Spirit.

In what we call 2 Corinthians, Paul referred to this great need as "we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (4:18).

Our churches today need men of health, sound academic preparation, a genuine call to the ministry and to other forms and methods of Christian service. But they also need men caught up, on fire for Christ, stirred by great emotions and great visions.

In many a churchly gathering one is impressed with the beauty of the surroundings—how many beautiful and modernly equipped edifices we have. All around us there are men presenting the finest physical and educational qualifications. But in a few minutes one may be amazed at the deadness, the flat legalism of all proceedings, the preoccupation with some of the minutiae of church affairs —and a complete lack of being stirred about or by anything.

Our more conservative brethren undoubtedly have their beliefs and especially their views of Scripture that we could not possibly accept—but we need some of

their enthusiasm and devotion and sheer vigor of emotion and consecration.

Seminaries began, some time ago, to react to this need. But from a vantage point of over 20 years in the active parish ministry, I dare to say that our theological students need a community and an emotional internship even more than one in a hospital, studying patients. They need an industrial internship—they need field work to get them out right where people are living and working and struggling. They should be in a case worker's office in a social welfare set-up, and they should be in other places where they will come into immediate and direct contact with people's needs and emotions.

II

Many of our men need more to be "caught up" than to be instructed in some detail of ministerial practice. More of our men need to be stirred by great thoughts and emotions and visions than they need instruction in how to conduct a funeral service or organize a visitation program. (Much as they need these.)

One of the ways a local group of ministers can start getting more of this could be found in the way some of us found it, some years ago. We had what we called a Manse Dwellers' Club—a group of ministers and their wives who gathered monthly in the home of one of them. First, we started having a formal business meeting and then one would read a dissertation on some serious theme in our field. But we soon found that we needed more our fellowship and friendliness, mutual counsel and encouragement. We needed to recount experiences to one another and tell of our stirrings and our droopings. This often sent us away caught up with a new enthusiasm and devotion.

Any man would do well also to have a select set of especially handicapped and elderly people who have been caught up with a great victory in life—a victory of faith, and one over the weaknesses of the flesh. Go to them when everything is flat and earthbound, and you cannot seem to get a stir out of anything! Or select a ward in a big hospital and go right through it, seeking out the secret of how some people are contending with the world with courage and faith!

We need more men and women, in all phases of our church and community life, who have obviously been caught up by the power of the indwelling and living Holy Spirit and who feel the stirrings of great emotions and great ideas. We need those who are really stirred and moved by the influence of Christ and by the challenge in the Christian ministry. Without this element we build our structures and organize our programs in vain!

Congregationalism's Next Esthetic Step

The Rev. Fred Smith

Ellis, Kansas

UNDOUBTEDLY, in the coming meeting of the General Council of the Congregational Churches of the United States to be held in New Haven, Connecticut, in June of this year, one of the high notes of joy in that meeting will come in the recognition of the splendid response made by the churches in general to the financial campaign for $4,500,000, initiated at the last General Council at Claremont, California, for the primary purpose of furthering and maintaining church buildings adequate to the needs of our time.

The assuming of this obligation by the Congregational churches of this country brought into bold relief an incidentally related fact deserving present consideration in all branches of Protestantism. Because THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY is

designed primarily to be read by Congregational ministers, I am addressing my thoughts on "Congregationalism's Next Esthetic Step" to this group specifically.

That Congregationalism has been moving forward esthetically, along with other branches of Protestantism, needs no special emphasis on my part. In our national denominational paper, *Advance,* under the editorship of John Scotford, this particular need was given special emphasis, an emphasis which has been admirably carried forward into the larger framework of a missionary perspective by the present editor of *Advance,* Andrew Vance McCracken. Anyone having to deal with our Congregational Church Building Society will have learned with profit how this functional esthetic approach is regarded as of fundamental importance. And the appearance of this article in THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY is but a further evidence of the acknowledged importance of the esthetic viewpoint in church building and arrangement.

Truly we are growing up in this respect. Yet I respectfully submit that we are not growing up fast enough. I hasten to justify this comment by the addition of another, namely, that Congregationalists, along with other varieties of Protestants in general, too often are building up to the measure of a fashion rather than up to the measure of the impulsion of a deeply felt faith, with the result that too often our churches are copies of a received architectural style instead of the creative expression of a deeply felt conviction.

I

Yet even as I speak so, I am conscious that many Congregationalists in their church building are groping and some are growing toward a fuller apprehension and appreciation of the esthetic in religion. The way of this groping makes an interesting episode in church history. Congregationalism, ancestored in England, but coming to an independent growth in these United States, was at first the child of an aspiration married to an antipathy. It was an attempt to form a brand new church, grounded in conviction yet emancipated from all forms of ritual bearing a popish tinge. Carried to excess this resulted in a contradiction and not a church. It was found that the spiritual could not exist without the aid of the material. A religion born of aspiration and argument found itself in need of an architecture. The soul had to have shelter.

In another place I have traced the growth of the church-shaping consciousness of these early Congregationalists; a consciousness that came to flower in the Colonial architecture of New England, having a subconscious affinity with the best in Greek architecture while giving expression to an anti-Roman antipathy. Let it be said that the result was not half-bad. Which conversely stated means that the result was more than half-good. *Laus Deo.* Congregationalists were stepping out along the esthetic highway that leads from duty up to beauty. Then came the total uplift of our civilization along esthetic lines in the maturing of our industrialized society activated by the machine. Man became less and woman more. A woman's touch became manifest in the gadgets of civilization. Our cars became beautiful—and our churches. Protestantism, caught in the general uplift went Gothic and called it going Godlike. The ancient antipathy died a natural death, and an architecture arose, born of an ancient memory, purified and sublimed. The new Protestantism was subject to the new psychology if not to the old philosophy. A new fashion in church architecture was inaugurated.

Many years ago, speaking to a president of a theological seminary that was about to launch a major building program in the Gothic style, I asked him what he thought Gothic was going to do to Protestantism. The question seemed to take him by surprise. It still does when I put the query to many of my fellow-ministers even yet. Yet it is doing it. I

am not here discussing the merits or demerits of Gothic as a style of architecture for the expression of a Protestant faith. I am merely saying that if Gothic architecture is accepted as a fact, it is a good thing to do some thinking as to what are its implications for our faith.

Into the diversities of these implications there is not space to enter in this brief article. Sufficient for me to mention here that from time to time I have attended convocations in a theological school where all was Gothic in the buildings and all non-Gothic in the lectures. That is to say the atmosphere was medieval but the arguments were ultra-modern. Yet I do not recall ever hearing anyone mention the divergence that (to me) amounted to a contradiction. Happily the day is coming when these seemingly contradictory divergences will be resolved into a heavenly synthesis caught up into the richer harmony which is called today ecumenicity.

While awaiting the dawning of that more glorious day it is incumbent upon us to ask as to what we are going to do with our Gothic copies which have been built in the copying of a fashion rather than in the expressing of a deeply felt faith. Having taken on Gothic it should be treated with respect. That is to say that they who use Gothic should have an etiquette adequate to that environment.

II

Closely related to this obligation is that of having in the church, particularly in the chancel, an understandable and understood symbolism. That is to say, with regard to the first mentioned necessity, whether the symbolism is copied or created, it should call forth the achievement of the second necessity, namely, that the symbolism be understood. A friend of mine, in another denomination, tells me that in a Gothic church which it took two years to build, not one word of instruction concerning the new shape of the building was given by the minister to the congregation. In the minds of many ministers the idea still prevails that nothing matters much in the environment provided he has a pulpit from which he can *hold forth.*

One of the encouraging signs of our day is that there is a growing belief among many Protestants that a church building should be the expression of a faith deeply felt and consonant with the universe of today and our present belief in the God of that universe. That is to say, the church of our time should be built to a sociological pattern but also to a theological principle. It should be philosophical in structure as well as functioning in shape. In a wide observation of the esthetic and symbolical trends in modern church architecture I have observed with joy an increasing interest and insight concerning these values and virtues. In a conversation recently with a layman, a member of a church in a city of high culture, I asked him what his minister was telling the congregation with regard to the relation between art and religion. He replied that if his minister knew anything of that relationship he had not yet acquainted the congregation with that fact. This, I submit, is the next esthetic step needing to be taken by many Congregational ministers and churches.

Addendum: On the morning on which I had given the final touches of revision to the foregoing article there came to my desk, as if in fulfillment of the desires expressed therein, the January number of *Church Management* (1954). This issue features "Architecture — Church Building." On this dual theme this issue of the magazine should, in my opinion, be made a *must* to all preachers. Particularly interesting to Congregationalists will be a most remarkable article concerning The First Congregational Church of La Crosse, Wisconsin, by its minister: Frederick W. Hyslop. Accompanying the text are three photographs of the various aspects of the Congregational Church at La Crosse. Here is a church that embodies all the forward looking thoughts to which I have given expression in the foregoing article.

From a Side Aisle

Mr. Harry B. Marsh
Springfield, Massachusetts

WHY do I go to church on Sunday? I go to church on Sunday partly because it has been a family habit ever since my boyhood days. We went to church as a family and we sat together in the same pew as a family. These early habits stay with one indefinitely and they have an extremely lasting effect. But now that I have grown up, I go to church also because I expect, and have a right to expect, to find there what I cannot get—at least in such full measure—in any other place.

Even before the service begins some of the beneficial effects are noticeable. It is restful just to sit quietly as one of a large congregation gathered together to help satisfy their spiritual needs. They wait in silence in the hope that some word will be spoken or some song will be sung to give their thoughts more definite direction and purpose. After a busy week of noise and confusion the calm and quiet of even a gathering throng are truly a preliminary uplifting influence. Then, later, the reading, the singing by the choir and by the people unite all present into one body setting their minds on higher planes and realizing and enjoying an atmosphere that can be found in no other gathering anywhere in the same degree. All these different features of the program of the morning, have their places and their desired effect. They add much to the tone of the entire service.

I

The strongest influence, however, directing and determining the character and the tone of the whole service, comes from the minister and his sermon. The writer has listened to sermons critically and, he hopes, constructively for well over fifty years. Some preachers have been most effective and inspirational, while many others, sad to relate, were almost purposeless and even at times tiresome. Of all the excellent preachers whom the writer has heard and admired he has picked out four who were outstanding. In order not to overemphasize his own judgment, however, he has chosen four men whose experience has covered many years of pulpit practice and who have justly won the universal acclaim and praise of large numbers and who were always greeted by large congregations. They were outstanding not simply from the viewpoint of the writer but even more to the point, from the stamp of approval of hundreds of listeners. They come from four large divisions of the Protestant faith. One was a Methodist, another a Presbyterian, the third a Baptist, and the fourth a Congregationalist. What quality or what qualities did these men have in common? They had many differences in make-up and manner. They must have had many similarities when they came into the pulpit. They did. We shall try to discover what made them so exceptional and what made their sermons of such high standard.

The first similarities they had in common were simplicity and sincerity. How often are the simplest facts camouflaged and confused by verboseness. The greatest truths can best be expressed in simple language. They often, of course, need some clarification, but the truth itself is what needs to be driven home in simple language. It needs no especial adornment or dressing. In fact, with too much embellishment it may become ornate rather than vigorous and convincing. And when we add sincerity to simplicity of

expression we have a combination that cannot be beaten and that these four men exemplified every time they stood up to preach one of their excellent sermons.

Then, too, these men followed a definite plan. Consequently they were direct and straightforward in their presentation. They had prepared an outline and they held to it faithfully. They were clear thinking when they put their address together and equally clear thinking when they gave their address to others. The listeners, in the meantime, had the feeling that they were following a preconceived plan that would lead them to a definite conclusion. The whole thought that the speakers wished to leave with them was presented to them step by step until the conclusion was inevitable. After a reasonable pause, to allow the final points to sink in, and the rounding out process to be complete, the speakers turned from the address of the morning to other closing details.

But, you may say or think any good speaker on almost any subject worthwhile, must be simple, sincere, and logical. What we desire to know is what made the four men mentioned such exceptional preachers. The answer is clear. As preachers they had, and they must have, something in addition. They might and probably would be good, effective speakers if they had the three qualities described above. They needed something else to be good preachers. This leads us directly to the religious aspect of the sermon. Here, then, is the nub of the whole matter. Back then, to the four outstanding preachers whom hundreds of eager followers rated so highly. They had one very important method of procedure in common. They firmly believed that they had a definite message to deliver to the best of their ability and therefore they proceeded to forget everything else, including themselves, so that that message might be most effective

II

Often I have been present when a congregation is brought to a high level of spiritual awakening, only to be suddenly let down by a humorous incident which has been dragged in by the minister. This incident would be perfectly proper elsewhere but it just does not belong here. Temporarily the preacher is thinking primarily of himself. He wishes to make an impression and he certainly does. Never again, at least during that sermon, can the listeners be restored to their former high position. As a matter of fact they will often go away from the service recalling the humorous episode and forgetting almost entirely the rest of the sermon, which probably deserved more careful consideration.

Yes, these four men gave their messages simply and forthrightly. There were no asides as such. The message itself was the offering which brought the earnest listeners. The preachers were simply the instruments chosen to present that message. Their attitude was purely impersonal. Yet they had those qualities of character which made their messages convincing. They gave us not merely platitudes or humorous asides but rather interpretations of the Bible truths, as they appealed to them, and through them, to us. By a succession of logical steps, but not logical to the point of dryness, we were led to the desired conclusion. We went out from those inspired meeting discussing only the impressive points in the sermon. I do not feel that I can emphasize too strongly that the messages that these four men gave, without any embellishments or humorous asides, was the first and most essential consideration. The putting forth of a message in a simple, straightforward, logical manner is a requirement, of course, which all good public speakers should acquire.

The making of one's presentation interesting and somewhat entertaining by the introduction of numerous asides may bring large audiences and increase one's popularity. The question that immediately arises is not how many come to church but what they get for their coming. The men that I have mentioned preached before large audiences but not

primarily for large audiences. They, and many others like them, believed thoroughly that when the great teachings of the Bible were presented clearly, all men would be attracted thereby and that they would act accordingly in their daily lives. They gave us a definite message simply, sincerely, and in a logical manner. Therein lay their great powers. Therein, it seems to the writer, is the chief reason why they were outstanding preachers.

Why do I go to church on Sunday? Certainly not to hear a treatise on current events or international problems. I can get that better at club meetings, forums, or in the weekly magazines. Certainly not to listen to humorous incidents. I can hear more amusing stories elsewhere. Certainly I do not wish to listen frequently to the ordinary sermons which the ordinary congregations require and expect. I am looking for directness and religious leadership, not for a spiritual sedative. Why do I go? I go for a simple, direct message which stays with me for many days. In short, I go to get something which I cannot get equally well anywhere else.

How Fair Is It to Crib?

The Rev. Kendig Brubaker Cully
Evanston, Ill.

MINISTERS are great quoters of others' ideas. The reason is not far to seek. Is it not because of the Saturday night deadline which comes inexorably every week? Except for the daily news commentator or columnist there is scarcely anyone who has to keep up the appearance of freshness and vitality with such regularity as the parish clergyman. A college instructor has to make an impression upon his students three or four times a week, but even if he is so thorough as to write his lectures for the class sessions, he knows very well that it will be only the first year's stretch that will lay such heavy demands upon him. The spadework having been accomplished, there will be some legitimate reason to repeat in the second and third years' rounds. Not so with the minister. His audience remains relatively the same year after year, regardless of the transients and visitors. There always will be someone in the congregation who will remember an illustration, a sequence of ideas, yes, even a phrase, for an incredibly long time. The saints have prodigious memories, at least about their pastors' pulpit utterances.

It is obviously absurd to assume that any minister can produce a completely original sermon every week. Even if he is thoroughly conscientious, chewing up others' ideas so that their mental mastication has become now his very own—that is, appropriating their ideas into his own heart and mind—the fact still remains that he has to depend to a great degree on the thoughts of these others. His well would run dry very, very soon did he not continually read—and read widely. Some clerical wells have been known to run dry indeed because such reading did not take place enough, if at all.

Some clergymen eschew quotation marks. This happens in at least two ways. There are the deliberate plagiarists, fortunately few in number, who do not hesitate to take a whole idea from someone else and let it come out whole in their own compositions. One time this writer read for review a book of sermons by a very promising young minister. The publisher, too, evidently had been suf-

ficiently impressed to have brought out the book in the first place. It really was invigorating preaching. In a footnote I happened to notice a reference to another volume of sermons, more than a decade old, by a friend of mine—a book which had not received much notice in the journals. Happy to find that so brilliant a writer as the man whose book I was reviewing had read my friend's earlier volume and profited from it, I wrote the friend congratulations that finally he had been "discovered." Little did I realize to what extent the new writer had profited from my friend's book! The friend looked up the new work. Shortly afterward I had a letter from him in which he laconically suggested I take up his own book, and compare certain paragraphs with those in the new one. It was downright theft. The footnote cited one small phrase which was put in inverted commas, but a whole chapter was scarcely more than a slight paraphrase, with no *passim* notation whatever.

I

We may assume, however, that even in an oral sermon which never reaches print, an ethical preacher will never resort to outright plagiarism. There is the other technique—absorbing the ideas of other men so completely that one sets them forth as one's own. Some men even deliberately school themselves not to make quotations at any time. Let the sermon be of one piece as a preacher's personal creation! This is probably a far different thing from plagiarism. It is rather more to be called a crib. The dictionary (*Webster's Collegiate,* Fifth Edition, page 240—*we* must be careful to cite sources) defines a crib as "a small theft; a plagiarism." We might therefore safely paraphrase to define a crib as a "little plagiarism."

What preacher is there who has not committed cribs according to that definition? One might well rationalize by saying that a homily would become incredibly boring if one had to pause every few minutes to say, "This idea, of course, is set forth with more completeness in Schleiermacher's *The Christian Faith*"; or, "It will be readily apparent that our thought at this point follows that of Reinhold Niebuhr in *The Nature and Destiny of Man;* or, "For fuller treatment of this matter let me refer you to page 259 of the current *Yearbook of American Agriculture.*" In print, certainly, we could afford footnotes. But with the spoken word there must be the pace of heavenly wings, and we must never forget the inspirational motivation without which we shall not reach the pew.

Furthermore, who is he to say that any new idea emerges from the pulpit? Are not most of our intellectual formulations necessarily derived from many factors in our personal experience? There was the beloved professor of early church history whose quiet voice uttered wisdom so profound that our attentive ear took it deeply into our subconsciousness. There was that powerful address we heard at the Rotary Club when obviously the men had been deeply gripped by the speaker's conviction, which had not failed to enter our minds deeply, also, to stay. There was that high moment when we first read Kant on the "categorical imperative" (or was it in a secondary source that we read about it?). His insight was appropriated forthwith into our personal spiritual equipment. Who has said anything, indeed, or penned a single idea which has not, as soon as we have pondered it, entered our minds to become thoroughly domesticated there? It would be too much to ask oneself to identify these strata of truth which pour out in a torrent on Saturday night. Are we not heirs of the thoughts of all the ages, insofar as we have had time to come to grip with some of them? Naturally, when we speak on Sunday, our people will know these thoughts to have come from our own deepmost souls—an authentic witness to the thoughts that are ours! If this be plagiarism, is it not an innocuous crib?

That scores of ministers crib from the

same sources becomes very obvious to any reviewer of homiletical literature. It is simply amazing how illustrations and ideas and even phrases get to become part of the "collective unconsciousness" from which preachers draw the inspiration for their flocks. One need think of only a few phrases to realize how truly indigenous to the American preacher's mind some of the fertile ideas have become. How can one be accused of cribbing when he employs so challenging a phrase as "the mountaintop experience"? Is not "creative faith" the very essence of the Christian way of life? Are we not called to be "co-laborers with God"? In fact, phrases like these—each of which obviously is based on some theological premise—have become so current in contemporary homiletical literature that it would be difficult to trace them to their original sources. Is there not, then, a perfectly legitimate justification for using them, as if they were indeed our own, which who would deny they are?

II

There is the other cribbing technique which has become so generally accepted that practically no one would challenge its right to exist. This is the facile way of referring to a writer in general terms, without identification. "As the poet says, 'The year's at the spring and day's at the morn.'" "As the poet says, 'Where is the Life we have lost in living? Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?'" Maybe Browning no longer cares, so utterly a part of common pulpit speech "Pippa Passes" has become; but Mr. T. S. Eliot might be inclined to be curious to see how his lines from "The Rock" are employed when taken out of context. Probably Mr. Eliot, Christian as he is, rather enjoys having the preachers read his works. Yet is there not a subtle temptation when one quotes a poet anonymously to do violence to the writer's right to be known in connection with his words? Is it perhaps simply another way of subtly letting *our* words be the important thing in the congregation's ears? Mentioning Browning or Eliot might deflect the hearers from catching the point which *we* are making, as if *de novo*. It has even been known to happen that a saint reported at dinner to his family, "The Reverend Doctor Miller said the most wonderful thing this morning. He can always be counted on for a fine turn of phrase. He certainly set me to thinking when he said, 'Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?'"

All of which leads us to one concluding observation. Why do not our clergy crib from the one source which beyond doubt is *the* writing from which they may quote consistently and as often as they like, without reservation? Here are actual words and insights deeply rooted in the subconsciousness. From these they may draw inexhaustibly. As astute listener will recognize allusions to the Platonic triad of truth, beauty and goodness as scarcely the pastor's own deductions; most intelligent people will be able to spot reference to the moral imperative as thoughts which the minister himself cannot be said to have arrived at through original ratiocination. But where are the saints who will not rejoice when they realize, week after week, that their pastor is cribbing from the glorious proclamation of the Word of God as it is found in The Book? There are no copyrights on its words or its insights, however legally copyrighted a particular version's text may be. From this Book we may not only crib as freely as we choose, but there is a deep sense in which we shall not be preachers of the Gospel at all unless we *do*.

An Ancient Ordination Charge

The Rev. Robert L. Young
Westhampton, Mass.

IN cataloging the diaries, sermons, and miscellaneous papers of the Rev. Enoch Hale (1753–1837), first pastor of the Church of Christ in Westhampton, Massachusetts (1779–1837), preparatory to writing his biography, I discovered several of his charges to candidates for ordination. They are all similar, though not identical, and upon comparing them with the charge at Hale's own ordination and others of the period, the one included here is typical of them all.

It was probably delivered shortly before or after 1800, although the exact date, the identity of brother E. B. W., and the "church in the town of L——" have not been identified.

The charge itself is a fine example of comprehensive counsel to the ordinand, revealing beneath the externals of that formal age an evident sincerity that reaches the heart even now, a century and a half later.

There are several implications concerning church polity that are interesting to Congregationalists in our current effort to determine just what a "free church" polity really is, if there can be *one*. Note the use of the word "presbytery" as the body laying on the hands."* The candidate, is ordained a "bishop *in* his church," not "bishop *of* his church," and the parallel to the New Testament use of "bishop" is obvious.

The advice to "profit by your knowledge of the original languages of the Bible" is almost a foreign note now, especially with the rash of new translations and paraphrases. The 18th century was much closer to the Elizabethan English of the King James version than the brief 150 years since this charge would indicate, yet the candidate is charged to go to the original Hebrew and Greek. The counsel is still good today. Hale, himself, constantly used his Greek, at any rate, as many of his scratch notes indicate.

The MS. is a folio 6¼″ x 8″, written with a clear hand in good ink on rag paper, and therefore well preserved. Hale had a system of abbreviations for many common words and suffixes that saved considerable space (and causes a transcriber occasional difficulties) which is not indicated in the transcription except in cases of uncertainty. The charge to the unknown brother follows:

Brother E. B. W.

In a solemn appeal to God, to confirm in heaven what is transacted in his behalf upon earth, you have by prayer with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery been consecrated to the gospel ministry, as a bishop in his church, and you have committed to your pastoral charge the church and people in the town of L——.

The occasion is interesting; the the trust you have received is momentous, important to you, to the people with whom you are to labor, and to the cause of religion. The usage of the church (?) is ?? solemn charge be administered—to stir up your pure mind in the way of rem—? To deliver this charge is by the ordaining council devolved upon me.

As Paul said to the elders of the Church of Ephesus, I say to you, Take heed unto yourself and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you an overseer, to feed the Church

*It is the ordaining *council*, however, that has given Hale the task and privilege of delivering the charge.

of God, which he purchased with his own blood. Observe, my brother, it stands first, that you take heed unto yourself. This is necessary to your safety, to your comfort and to your usefulness in doing the good work which you have undertaken. See to the truth of your love, to both God and man, of your relation to Christ and of your spiritual walk. Keep your heart with diligence, out of (which?) are the issues of life; and being pure within, let your outward walk be holy. Remember "a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self willed, not soon angry, but vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach." In conversation and in conduct be prudent; wise as a serpent, harmless as a dove; on all occasions ready to impart instruction, and to be an example of good works.

Watch and pray, continue in prayer with all perservance. In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made to God. Go to him as your father in heaven, ask for his Holy Spirit, believing that he is more ready to give it, than an earthly parent is to bestow bread on a petitioning child.

Let also the word of God dwell in you richly. Search the Scriptures as the book in which you have eternal life. Study it faithfully, learn its doctrines, precepts, promises and threatenings. Make it the (man?) of your counsel, and let the gospel (which?) you preach be that which you establish by "Thus saith the Lord." Profit by your knowledge of the original languages of the Bible, thoroughly to understand the sacred book; and be prepared as a wise steward of your Lord's goods, to bring out of (this?) treasure things new and old, as the various wants of your hearers may require.

Preside in the house of God, with gravity and discretion. Administer holy things with solemnity. Baptize, as there shall be occasion, the sheep and the lambs of Christ. Bless and break his bread; give thanks, and pour out the wine of his cup, to the members of his family, in the manner which he has appointed. In hearing rule, act in character (?) as a Pastor, appointed to feed the Lord's flock. Do naught by partiality, but in every case act with pureness of intention, with wisdom and with firmness. When called to ordain to the holy ministry, lay hands suddenly on no man; neither be partaker of other men's sins; keep thy self pure. But these (?) things "commit to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also."

God, who in Christ is reconciling the world to himself, commits to his ministers the word of reconciliation. Now then, as an ambassador for Christ, as (tho') God did beseech men by you, pray (thus in?) Christ's stead that they be reconciled to God. In the great work of preaching be faithful, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the inspired word, to give to every bearer a portion in season. Preach Christ and him crucified, knowing that it hath pleased God by the foolish(ness) of preaching to save them who believe. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction, in righteousness," that the man of God, "the preacher of the cross," may be perfect thoroughly furnished unto all good works." "I charge thee therefore," and do it, my brother, in the words of Paul to his beloved Timothy, "I charge *thee* before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and kingdom. Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine." "Warn the unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient in teaching all men." In meek(ness) instructing those who oppose (themselves?) if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledg(ing) of the truth."

"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee," which as I have said, has been committed to thee by prayer with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all." "Take heed to thyself and to thy doctrine; continue in them; for in so doing," said the apostle, "thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." "Hold fast the form of sound words;" "Watch in all things, endure afflictions, do the work" of a pastor and teacher, "make full proof of thy ministry." "Fight the good fight, keep the faith, that when thou shalt finish thy course thou mayest receive the crown of righteousness, which the Lord the (?) judge will give at the deciding day to all them who love his appearing. Amen. And may God be with thee and bless thee.

Recovering Apostolic Kind of Faith

Statement of Faith Fifty Years After Ordination

The Rev. George Tolover Tolson
Berkeley, California

FROM my mother the truth came upon me suddenly and forcibly that God is as good as was my adored father. From my father's objections to certain doctrines which he was supposed to believe, I became convinced that if I were to know anything I would have to find it out for myself. After mother's death when I was six years of age and father's when I was twelve this latter conviction was strengthened. Before entering college I had lived in families of Baptists, Disciples, Evangelicals and Quakers, attended a U. P. church and joined their Christian Endeavor. I had also joined a Congregational Church. Early in my teens I gathered and took "home" to read surreptitiously pamphlets on every sort of "ism" I could find and I found a lot of them.

While working in a bank that failed in 1893 and seeing two officers becoming sick at the stomach, my dearest chum's father lose his wealth, take to drink and break up his family, I decided to know better my world. At college I did extra-curricular reading "with a vengeance." Several years before James' Pragmatism appeared I decided upon an experiment. I posited the theory that Spencer's unknown and unknowable unity back of all known reality is in reality the Heavenly Father and, living up to the implications as well as I could, reasonably, I tried out the theory pragmatically. It worked so well that it has been my guiding star in thought and practice.

Not content with social and economic theories alone I took two trips among migrant workers, tramps, and unintentionally among a gang of criminals, riding blind baggage, sidedoor pullmans, and the rods and visiting soup kitchens and flop houses. One of the trips became dangerous, but both were very rewarding.

Sojourning in Europe in 1911–12 I learned that Machiavelli was very much alive in international diplomacy and that Nietzsche was not by any means crazy according to many university students and newspaper editors. Employing my unique method I learned that war was impending. These facts became a most

painful disillusionment. I wept. I changed the title of my department in the theological seminary to History of Christianity.

During the war I worked in the army YMCA. After the World War, in preparation for a report on Industrial Reconstruction for a denominational group I worked in a shipyard and joined the Boilermakers' Union. For more than a decade I was member and chairman of my city's Commission of Public Charities and also member of the executive committee of the Community Chest. For many years I was member of a club of professional and business men to hear and also to deliver papers on world affairs.

I

When conducting courses in modern religious denominations I took classes to all sorts of Catholic, Protestant, Jewish and nondescript groups to attend worship and to hear accounts of their respective ideas and customs. When making field social studies I took students not only to social agencies but also to visit great business, manufacturing, transportation and financing organizations to hear the other side of social and economic problems.

A professor at Yale Divinity School, one at Rochester Theological Seminary and another at Chicago made a few similar studies but on a far less extensive scale and for special purposes. If any man has ever made more effort in more ways than I have been privileged to do to find out the truth about God, man and nature I have never heard of him. From my heart I thank my God for Providences, though some were very hard, which enabled me to "accept the universe," to find myself at home in this one of the "many mansions," to respond to the best of my too limited ability to the confirmations of Christian truth and to answer the challenging call of the present world situation.

Apostolic faith was characterized by assurance and convincing evidence (Heb. 11:1). The word "elegchos" cannot be translated well either by "evidence" (Authorized Version) or by "conviction" (RSV). It means the kind of evidence that convinces.

One reason for the triumphal success of Christianity till the end of the Middle Ages was the maintenance of apostolic faith by interpreting Christian truth as occasion arose from age to age in terms of current thought. One reason for the decline of Christianity as a factor in civilization in modern times is the loss of the apostolic kind of assurance and convincing evidence. This in turn is due to failure to restate Christian truth in the light of the marvelous accumulation of knowledge which has drastically changed the conception of the universe.

Whatever be one's epistomology; whether or not there is such a process as causality, whatever be the difficulty with the theodicy all must and I believe do agree that there is "sufficient ground" back of all known reality. Tychism is out. If a million million of Bertrand Russell's monkeys monkeying with a million million typewriters should chance to type all the books in the British Museum in a billion billion years they would not know what they had written nor could they employ it for moral and spiritual welfare. Law even when written with a capital "L" does not do what is going on in the natural world. It only describes our observation regarding what is taking place. As for "unconscious purpose" it is a clear instance of "contradictio in adjecto." There could be no such propensity inherent in the universe. Purpose cannot be unconscious. Neither Schopenhauer's will, Bergson's élan vital nor Marx's dialectic would be sufficient to account for or explain what has taken place in the world as known today.

Tychism, Law and "unconscious purpose" being ruled out, we take up the long neglected responsibility of interpretting religion in terms of current thought and in the light of contemporary local and international conditions as was assumed by Old Testament prophets, early

Jewish and gentile Christians, Apostolic, Post Apostolic and Church Fathers till the end of the Middle Ages. The following very brief sample studies point the way to "convincing evidence" for believable and motivating apostolic kind of faith.

II

Albert Einstein seems to have searched farther into the universe and penetrated more deeply its secrets than any other man. He devoutly contemplates conscious mind maintaining itself through the ages and manifested as intelligence and beauty all but infinitely beyond comprehension by the human mind. If one posits the theory that this conscious mind is the Heavenly Father and tests the theory pragmatically by living accordingly it will prove to be true. There are many other convincing evidences of our Christian faith. Space permits only brief references to a few.

A Doctor of Philosophy says that he has come to believe in God because of the goodness of man. Whatever we think of the theory of progress, anthropology records the development, or the continuous creation of man out of the bestiality of the apeman and the caveman into increasing humanity. The elemental goodness of bad men is astonishing. The crime which is committed by men of ordinary intelligence is largely mental sickness. Penal institutions are being slowly adjusted to this fact. The fall of man and inherited guilt are mythological. Taken as historical they have been the cause of much of man's inhumanity to man.

Civilization with law and order, the home, the church, the school, all the religions of the world and their Bibles are creations of man "under God" and they testify to man's inherent goodness. As in organic evolution, in all his relations to man God has exercised only such supervision as will accomplish His ultimate purpose leaving main responsibility to man in order to let him win his soul. That man is by nature depraved and can do nothing about his salvation is observably not true. Human nature, man's instincts or "unlearned tendencies" are good. Only their abuse is bad. Because essential humanity in contrast with man's relationship to animals is so godlike, on the basis of mutual fellowship between man and God and in view of the many evidences of the influence of mind on body and the independence of the mind of the body we conclude that God will not let a man forever die.

"The man Christ Jesus," "son of David according to the flesh," "made in all points as we are yet without sin" is the strongest convincing evidence for apostolic faith. James and John were "sons of" (like) thunder and the Pharisees were "sons of" (like) the devil. The things that Jesus did as well as said were so divine, so like God, that we may say that he was *the* son of God or the very incarnation of God, of course in a spiritual sense. What Jesus meant by "son of man" cannot be determined. It may have had messianic meaning; but he certainly was what a human being is when totally divested of inhumanity.

III

Being at once son of God and son of man, Jesus is truly *the* Savior of the world. He is "the way the truth and the life." His is the true way to live. He is no god or demigod parading as a man to our admiration and also to our despair because having tremendous advantage over us. He is our real example and a challenging inspiration, not our substitute. There is no substitute for character. There is none other name (qualities, spirit) . . . whereby we must be saved. Salvation is no Roman imperial sort of legal contract about values not transferable nor subject to contract. Salvation is an understandable spiritual reality. We are saved in this world and in the next insofar as we are like Christ who is like God and lost insofar as we are not like them.

The materializations of spiritual truth

n the Gospels in which some of us found an obstacle to faith and others an indisputable help must be read with understanding. The virgin birth, the (spiritual) resurrection, appearances and ascension of Jesus tell people who find abstract and spiritual thinking difficult that Jesus was divine, that he still lives in the spirit world and still ministers to individuals who appeal to him.

IV

The natural world furnishes convincing evidence for apostolic faith. The natural world is evidently good for its purpose. It was in and by means of the natural world that man developed, grew, or was created by the process of organic evolution. Wasteful prodigality in some forms of reproduction and wrong directions taken by many species which exist now only in fossils do not indicate that no mind has been in control. These mistakes are evidences of the wisdom and patience of God in growing what in the nature of things cannot be fabricated or concocted. Selfconsciousness, power of contrary choice, moral sense and conscience are like skills. They are not material entities that are negotiable. They must be attained. The first human beings had to be grown. In evolutionary processes and in all His relations to man, God exercises only such control, guidance and inspiration as is necessary to accomplish His purposes and allows man to win his own soul. God guides and answers prayer largely by calming distracting fears, clarifying judgment and inspiring effort.

The ethical neutrality of nature and natural evils, difficult as they are to understand, do not indicate that if there is a God He has no regard for human welfare. If good deeds and bad were speedily and materially rewarded and punished respectively man, would serve God for hire. He would subordinate the spiritual and eternal to the material and temporal. There could be no virtue, no development of personality into godlikeness.

The oneness of the interrelated universes and the continuity and uniformity of natural laws, which are in reality the observed ways of God with the world, indicate the oneness and unity of the unchangeable God. Evidently God is not dual, trine, multiple nor many. That God does not break His own laws to accomplish His purposes testifies to intelligence and foresighted wisdom far more wonderful than any miracles would be.

The recent discovery of a universe a millionfold greater than the former conception of it from antiquity till the sixteenth century magnifies the conception of God. From the ancient times to a few hundred years ago the universe was thought to consist of a comparatively flat piece of land with corners, hell a little below the surface, and heaven just out of sight above the land. Martin Luther said that thunder and lightning were caused by devils who usually are in hell but often get up to earth and dwell in dark, pooly places in forests ready to spring upon persons and occasionally get into the heavens and raise a rumpus. One hundred and sixteen years after Luther posted his theses, Galileo was threatened death at the stake and eternal fire in hell if he persisted on teaching that the earth moved around the sun. The Creator of the known farflung spiral universes cannot be a tribal god partial to ancient Hebrews and early Christians to the neglect of the rest of mankind, neither revealing Himself to them nor inspiring their Bibles much less sending them into eternal torture for not believing on him of whom they had never heard. God is too great to be so small as to be partial, arbitrary, capricious or vindictive.

The present world offers abundant convincing evidence for assured faith. To the Old Testament Major Prophets social, political, national and international conditions made divine revelations. Often their "Thus saith the Lord" was based upon the testimony of such revelations. For the first time in history ours

is a world situation. Partly for this reason our time makes an unusually clear and emphatic testimony for Christian faith. The truth of what Jesus said about saying "raca" is screaming at us. We have been saying it to colored peoples, dwellers in slums and to peoples under colonial rule. Now our sins have found us out. Christian nations are being wrecked. Our civilization is in danger. Domestic and world conditions are proclaiming that we are our brother's keepers. Juvenile delinquency and horrible crimes are frightening us. Shall we not hear the "Thus saith the Lord" about our paying more for pleasure, tobacco and even for liquor than for church, school, playgrounds and slum clearance?

Throughout the world with few exceptions comes news of decline of interest in religion Protestant, Catholic and ethnic. As knowledge grows from more to more there is confusion of religious thought to the detriment of faith. Limited forms of the higher criticism is being employed in all the great religions. In time it will separate truth from error and show the relevance of believable religion to modern life and personal needs. Even Christian isolationists are becoming convinced of divine revelation as well as human error in all the Bibles of the world. The extreme statement made recently by a Christian author that all essential truth in religion is to be found in every one of the great religions, does not seem to be born out by facts, however, truths from all religions seem to be conspiring to form one religion for the possible one world. Religion then Christian in reality but perhaps not in name would no longer be a divisive factor in a world very dangerously divided.

V

It may be difficult in the first place to ferret out the convincing evidences of things not seen in the many forms of modern knowledge especially in the observable ways of God as expressed in what we call natural, social, psychological laws. It does not require that one be a specialist in all arts and sciences; but it does require intellectual industry, open and honest mindedness and much experience in devout living. If this revelation through the observable ways of God with the world could be made sufficiently evident as to become a new orthodoxy there would not be sufficient reason for believing "because the church says so," "because it is in the Bible," or "because it is in the Protestant tradition." These are not to be despised but they are hardly apostolic faith.

A minister who confesses that he believes "because it is in the Protestant tradition" writes that he thinks there is sore need for a new theology. This study, it is hoped, will illustrate how we should proceed to interpret Christianity, as did the apostolic and church fathers, in the terms and light of contemporary knowledge.

Jesus was much disappointed that the people could not interpret "the signs of the times." The present world situation is our "Thus saith the Lord." It comes loud and clear from billions of people rising up pleading for fuller life than their likes have ever known. It comes not only from Macedonia but from every part of the world. For the first time in history there is the "know how" to answer both materially and spiritually if families are planned. Upon our peril we must hear and heed "what the Spirit saith to the churches."